

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE PRESENT

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ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HON. LORD RAWDON,

AND THE OTHER MEMBERS

OF THE

TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,

ASSOCIATED FOR THE

PRESERVATION OF THE CONSTITUTION,

AND

PROMOTING THE PROSPERITY

OF

THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

BY A

LATE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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THE RIGHT HON. LORD RAYDON

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AND THE COMMONS

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

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THE THIRD EDITION

LONDON

Printed by J. G. DEBURY, at the Bathurst Press, No. 7, Fleet Street.

RIGHT HONOURABLE
L O R D R A W D O N.

MY LORD,

THE general good reception which the papers I had lately the honour to address to your Lordship, and your respectable Society, have met with from the Public, encourages me to hope that the phrenzy of reform has abated; and that the people no longer consider the zealots of Republicanism

canism as the truest friends of liberty ; or the assertors of the political, as well as the natural, equality of all men, as the ablest supporters of the British Constitution. Their happiness under that Constitution they also appear to be fully sensible of ; and the knowledge of its principles, and of the just balance to be preserved among its parts, is so generally, and so happily diffused throughout the nation, that the suffrages of the people are no longer to be obtained by pretending to amend it ; or their plaudits gained by firmness in opposition to all Administrations. Indeed,

deed, the late instances we have had in America, and in France, of the dreadful effects and ruinous consequences of trampling upon the executive authority, and breaking loose from the established Government, cannot fail to make impressions upon the most inattentive to public affairs, and convince every Englishman, who reflects upon his own happy condition, how much it is his interest to withstand all innovations in the Constitution, whatever pretences of amending it may be set up by factious empirics.

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The United States of America may now, with truth, apply to themselves the Italian's epitaph, "I was well, I would be better, and here I am;" and God defend Great Britain from ever having any claim to it *. Indeed, it is but doing

* The learned Usher, in his Clio, speaks admirably upon this subject; and as it is a book not in the hands of every body, I will subjoin an extract from it. "Let us," says he, "take in the whole series of conduct of past Republics in vindication of liberty, and we shall find that *no people that ever broke from Monarchy, or the government of a few, and adopted the popular form, ever stopped at any step short of anarchy; but regularly, and with a precipitate inclination, proceeded to demolish,*

"step

ing justice to the body of our people
to say, they are so generally sensible

“ *step by step, every prerogative of the ruling*
 “ *powers, until they came to that level which it*
 “ *is impossible to enjoy in an opulent state.* If the
 “ Romans, the Carthaginians, the Athenians,
 “ and every other popular State that ever ex-
 “ isted, proceeded alike, directly and regular-
 “ ly, to untie every band of Government, until
 “ they fell into disorder and anarchy, and *made*
 “ *a tyranny necessary to save them from the mis-*
 “ *eries of endless civil war* ; it cannot be doubted
 “ but the real object of their desires is that li-
 “ berty of which human nature is always en-
 “ amoured, and ever incapable of possessing.
 “ Men are very often hurried on by the vio-
 “ lence of their passions, without seeing their
 “ ends, or suffering themselves to take a view
 “ of the landing-place to which they tend ;
 “ and reason, that eternal volunteer in the ser-

fible and well informed (thanks to our newspapers and circulating libraries, with all their faults) that they are seldom greatly misled ; or if they are at any time set wrong, it is not difficult to bring

“ vice of the passions, only serves to find pre-
 “ tences and excuses to justify the inclinations.
 “ The Parliament who attacked King Charles
 “ the First, never suspected they were running
 “ into anarchy : they felt the grievance of Go-
 “ vernment : by little and little they eased
 “ themselves of their burden ; they grasped at
 “ power ; every advance they made towards
 “ freedom, only made the remainder of sub-
 “ jection intolerable to them ; but the minute
 “ they acquired the full possession of liberty, the
 “ tyranny of Cromwell became necessary to save
 “ them from cutting one another’s throats.”

them

them back again into the right road ; not because they are of an unsteady disposition, as is ignorantly supposed, but because they have the good sense to renounce their errors when they discover them.

The great change which the Constitution of this country underwent at the Revolution, when the throne was declared vacant, and a King elected to fill it, gave it such a bias to the Democratic side, that had it not been for the existence of a competitor for the Crown, which obliged the ruling

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party

party to allow the reigning Prince to exercise the ancient powers, or to invest him with temporary new ones, the Monarchical authority would have long since merged in the Democracy; and the King of Great Britain would have had no other means to maintain his influence in the State, than the procuring a majority in the House of Commons to take his part*. The extinction of Jacobitism has taken away the pretence for vesting the King with extraordinary powers;

* It is Montesquieu's opinion, that the people of Great Britain will lose their liberties, through the legislative body becoming more corrupt than the executive.

and

and those which even the Revolution left him, have since been curtailed in many cases. But as the executive Power cannot have sufficient energy to carry on the Government with dignity and effect, and to afford that protection and security to the subjects which they have a right to demand, and which it is the duty of the Executive to give, without that firm and constant support which, from the nature of men, is not to be expected, where their individual interests are not engaged ; there arises an absolute necessity of vesting in the Executive a *certain degree* of

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influence ; and the only question for reasonable men to discuss is, what that degree ought to be ; that, on the one hand, it may be sufficient to give vigour and energy to a wise and good Administration ; and not be so great as, on the other hand, to screen or support a weak or a wicked one.

To investigate our present condition, and to assist the Public in coming to a right decision upon this question, is the object of my present undertaking. And although I propose, likewise, to consider

sider the state of the nation under the several heads of its *finances*, its *trade*, and *colonies*, and its *religious establishment*, I shall at present confine myself to the consideration of the *state of the King's government only* (for if that be not properly poised, and properly regulated, all attempts to improve the national circumstances must be vain and nugatory.) And as the constitutional principles of your respectable Society, and the avowed purpose of its institution, correspond entirely with my design, I am persuaded you will receive what I have now the honour to address to your
Lord-

Lordship, as a proof of my sincere
desire to co-operate with your
laudable intentions, and as a tes-
timony of the respect and esteem
with which I am

Your Lordship's

most faithful and

most obedient servant,

WILL. KNOX.

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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE PRESENT

STATE OF THE NATION.

THE truth of that aphorism of the moralists which represents mankind as unconscious of the value of a good they possess until they actually lose it, or find themselves in danger of being deprived of it, was never more fully proved than by the general affliction which the King's late illness occasioned; and the universal joy and exultation diffused by the glad tidings of his happy recovery. The dejection and despair which were visible in every face of the multitude, when the dark cloud of calamity hung over the nation; and the heart-felt expressions of joy which

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broke forth when the sky brightened, and their beloved luminary again cheered them with his benevolent rays, leave no room to suppose that political interests, or party artifice, had any share in their feelings. It was their genuine love for their King, the real sentiments of their hearts, the result of their strong conviction of the excellence of his character, his virtuous dispositions, tender affections, and sincere regard for the liberties and happiness of his subjects. What delight then must such a testimony of the unfeigned attachment of all his people give to a prince, whose innate rectitude of mind, and conscientious discharge of the duties of his high trust tell him he deserves it? But however pleasing and consolatory these testimonies may be to his Royal breast, they cannot add weight to the motives by which his conduct towards his people has continually been directed. His affection for them is not capable of increase; nor can the obligations he has always felt himself under,

as the instrument of the Supreme Governor of the Universe, to promote their happiness, be augmented by any temporal consideration ; neither can the people have any better security for his just and beneficent administration, than his own conviction of being the servant of the Omniscient and Omnipotent Being, and accountable to him for the use he makes of the power entrusted to him.

But while I congratulate my fellow-subjects upon their felicity, and their sensibility of it, they must give me leave to express my concern, that it should require the apprehension of so severe a calamity as they were threatened with, to make them feel and acknowledge the blessings they enjoy under so excellent a Sovereign. Was not a series of seven and twenty years blameless administration sufficient to convince them of his worth ? What expression of his lips, what suggestion of his heart, or what action of his life, discovered a disposi-

tion hostile to their liberties, or injurious to their prosperity; but, on the contrary, has not his whole reign been distinguished for its forbearance, compliances, and benignity? Their late representatives have, indeed, furnished an answer that palliates the people's ingratitude. They have represented their Sovereign to their constituents as an enemy to their liberties and happiness, by charging him with having *increased*, and with *increasing*, the dangerous, the criminal influence of the Crown; for dangerous and criminal it must be if it *ought to be diminished*.

As Mr. Dunning's resolution specifies no time for the commencement of the increase of this baneful influence, he involves the preceding reigns in the same criminal charge with the present; but as I think it of very little importance to the public, to vindicate the characters of dead kings, or dead ministers, I shall leave it to the relations of the Walpoles,
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the Pelhams, and Lord Chatham, to account to the shades of those great ministers for suffering so foul a censure upon their memories, and take up the charge as it affects his present Majesty only; and examine its foundation by a brief review of some particular incidents of his reign.

At the moment of his accession, his Majesty relinquished his claim to the whole produce of the taxes which had been appropriated for the support of the late King's civil establishment, which amounted to upwards of a million, and accepted a rent-charge of only 800,000*l.* in lieu thereof. And in his first session he recommended to Parliament to make the tenure of the Judges in their offices more permanent, and their salaries more certain; and the peace of Paris having giving him the property of the prizes taken before the declaration of war, which amounted to upwards of 700,000*l.* and the lands in the ceded islands,

islands, which were estimated at 200,000l. more, he generously gave the whole to the public, making together a sum sufficient to have purchased all the seditious pens, and to have silenced the tongues of all the factious declaimers that have infested his reign, if his Majesty had been capable of employing it so unworthily. Which of these acts, flowing from his Majesty's own benevolence, may I ask the traducers of their Sovereign, was it that served to *increase* the corrupt influence of the Crown, or indicated a disposition in the King injurious to the liberties of his subjects? Or was his cheerful concurrence with the wishes of his Parliaments in the acts for quieting possessions, and abrogating the *nullum tempus* which affected the property of their constituents, or in the act proposed by Mr. Grenville, for securing to them the representative of their choice, stronger proofs of such a disposition? But even were the facts I have stated insufficient to disprove the charge,

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the very circumstance of carrying such a resolution was a full confirmation of its fallacy ; and the Speaker might have told the husky orator who presented it, with as much truth as the prophet Isaiah tells the fabricator of an idol, *that he held a lie in his right hand*. Nor did subsequent events bear a less unequivocal testimony to its want of truth ; for, upon Lord North's resignation in 1782, the new Ministers were able to make it the condition of their service, that they should nominate to all the offices and dignities of the Crown : and even the mover of the offensive resolution was exalted to the peerage, and admitted into the King's Cabinet Council ; while the favourite servants of the most beloved, because the most amiable, Princess that ever shared the British throne, were indebted for their preservation to that excellent understanding and shrewd wit which her Majesty so eminently possesses. For when the Ministers proposed to change her Chamberlain and Master of the Horse,
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her Majesty told them, they might take away those she had, but they could not oblige her to have others in their room; and if those were taken away, she would do without any. And the same House of Commons which resolved, in 1781, that the influence of the Crown was increasing, carried up to the King, in 1784, a resolution to the effect of denying his Majesty's right to appoint any Minister which they did not recommend or approve. Yet fallacious as the assertion contained in Mr. Dunning's resolution appears to be from the facts I have stated, it was made the foundation for Mr. Burke's famous bill, the mischievous effects of some parts of which I have already pointed out in a former publication*, and every day's experience brings conviction to the friends of the Constitu-

* Extra Official State Papers. That gentleman has, however, by his late most admirable display of the excellencies of the British Constitution, greatly atoned for his share of the injuries done to it by his party.

tion of the ill consequences of others; but, as the nation is not yet sufficiently informed of them, it may be prudent to wait till they become more flagrant, before any attempt is made for the amendment of the bill. But there is another act of the same year, which ought not to be suffered to continue on the statute roll a single session without alteration; as it infringes the rights of the great body of the constituents of the Commons, *the freeholders* of Great Britain.

Whoever is at all read in the ancient History of England, must know that the *possession of a freehold* was the basis upon which the capacity of every man to participate in the public councils, or administration of the Government, was founded; and that fundamental principle is still so far retained, that the King cannot make a Peer, nor give a Bishop a seat in the House of Lords, until he is qualified by the possession of a freehold. The ancient state of the House of Commons

mons was an assembly of *freeholders* only; some sitting in right of their own freeholds, and others representing their fellow-freeholders of small estates. The franchise of voting in the election of such representatives, is, therefore, an inherent right, coeval with the constitution, antecedent to any Parliament, and inseparably attached to the possession of a freehold; and no delegated power in the State can deprive any freeholder of his franchise who is competent in age and understanding, and unconvicted of any criminal act that incurs a legal forfeiture of it. Upon what ground, then, did the House of Commons found their claim of right to deprive a description of freeholders of the exercise of their franchise, who are so far from having committed crimes against the State, or done any thing to incur a legal forfeiture, that they are among its most useful members, and so beneficially employed in the public service, that without their aid the national commerce could not subsist, nor
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the Government be supported? If an House of Commons shall therefore assume to itself a power to join with the other branches of the legislature, in depriving such freeholders of the exercise of their legal franchise, it is no longer to be denominated a delegated body, the representative of freeholders; but possessing power to constitute itself; or, which is the same thing in effect, to permit those only to vote in their election, whose suffrages they can command; for they may with equal justice, and upon the same grounds of *imputed* influence, deprive of their votes every officer and soldier in the army; every seaman and marine in the navy; every artificer or labourer in the dock-yards or fortifications, and all employed in clothing or victualling any of them; which may, with a little management, be made to include the farmers and graziers who supply the cattle and grain.

I object not to their assumption of

authority over the right of voting in elections, which arises from freedom of corporations, or any other franchise than the possession of a *freehold*; for those rights are novelties in the constitution, and long subsequent to the formation of Parliaments; whereas the freeholders' franchise must of necessity have been prior to the origin of Parliament, and formed the essence of its constitution, and cannot therefore be restrained, much less suppressed, by it.

Notwithstanding the instances I have given of the restraints upon the Royal authority, which his present Majesty either proposed or cheerfully acquiesced in, still the prodigious increase of the national debt, and the consequent augmentation of the revenue to discharge the interest of it, is represented by the republicans, and admitted by the country gentlemen, as having greatly added to the influence of the Crown; and as this is a matter of great importance to be
rightly

rightly understood, and I conceive the subject has never been properly handled, I shall give it a full discussion.

Before the Revolution the Crown was possessed of a very large estate, or hereditary revenue; so considerable, indeed, that the second Charles supported his government for some years without any aid from Parliament, and consequently the independence and influence of the Crown was then very great. The Revolution, at the same time it reduced this estate, by also dividing the people's attachment to the Crown between two claimants, created a necessity for an extraordinary expence to support the new establishment, which required extraordinary aids from Parliament, and hence arose the importance of the House of Commons, and the dependence of the Crown upon it. The practice of funding confirmed that importance, and increased that dependence; for the apprehension of the discontinuance of a single session

session would have given the alarm to the public creditors, and have raised a clamour against the Government, and shut up all the resources of the Crown. As the public debt increased the public creditors became more numerous, and of greater influence in the public councils; and their weight was wholly thrown into the scale of the Commons, on whom they depended for payment. The support of a majority in that House then became necessary to the Crown, and the King could no otherwise obtain that majority than by putting his government into the hands of whoever had already the command of it, or were able to obtain it; and thus has the democratical demagogues so absorbed the essential powers and prerogatives of the Crown, that in the same ratio as the public debt has augmented, the dependence of the Crown has increased, and the wearer of it is almost reduced to be the mere state pageant of the Minister, *whose influence has indeed increased, is increasing, and ought*

ought to be diminished; but which the country gentlemen have been made to believe is the influence of the Crown; though it is so far from it, that it threatens not only the enslavement of the Prince, but the destruction of the Constitution: and as I trust I shall be able to convince them of the essential difference in the distinction between the influence of the Crown, and the influence of such a Minister as I have described; and to prove to their satisfaction that it will be advantageous for the public, and consonant to the principles of the Constitution, to wrest that influence out of his hands, and give it back to the Prince upon the throne, to be exercised under his own direction, and by Ministers of his own appointment, I shall hope to obtain their support of such measures as may appear to have that tendency.

One great advantage of an hereditary monarchy over an elective one, is the connecting the interests of the Sovereign
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and his family, with the *permanent* prosperity and happiness of the people. For no King, at least no British King, can be powerful and respected abroad, or easy and revered at home, if his subjects be not in a flourishing and happy condition. Allowing our Kings, therefore, to possess common sense, and to have the like regard for their posterity with other men, they cannot be supposed to adopt any system, or to pursue any measures injurious to the present or future prosperity or happiness of the people; but, on the contrary, like other wise and good parents, they will, in many instances, suppress their own personal feelings, curb their passions, and forego their private gratifications, to render their posterity more powerful, or more happy; and, consequently, to increase the number and opulence of their subjects. The exceptions to this reasoning will be found as rare among our Hereditary Princes, as among private gentlemen. Both may, indeed, mistake in their objects,
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and in the means they employed to attain them; and the same wisdom which has fettered the private man from adopting extravagant projects, by entailing his estate, has restrained the monarch from indulging a wild ambition, or forming visionary schemes of aggrandizement, by defining his powers, and rendering accountable the instruments by which he exercises them. It is true, it may be said of Hereditary Princes, what Solomon says of private men, that “none can tell whether he
 “will be a wise man or a fool that is to
 “come after him;” and therefore it
 “may be inferred, that as a Minister must have talents, in order to obtain such an influence as shall exalt him to that station, there will be a greater certainty that the Government will be exercised *wisely* by such an one, than by an Hereditary Prince. This is the main argument in favour of elective monarchies; but it is unsupported by facts in any country. I will, however, admit, that were a captivating oratory, great address in managing

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ing a party, much cunning, or even a daring, intrepid spirit, the essential requisites in the character of an excellent supreme magistrate, that we should be more certain to find them in an elected than in an hereditary one; and that a demagogue of the House of Commons is much more likely to possess them than a British King. But our Constitution is so happily tempered, and its whole machinery so well constructed, that it requires less *skill* than it does *good intentions*, to keep it in order; or, in other words, that the hand which puts it in motion, should be directed by a good heart, rather than a good head— And as I have already shewn that our Hereditary Monarchs can have no interest; and, in these enlightened times, can hardly be suspected of such weakness as to entertain a purpose injurious to the permanent prosperity and happiness of their people, it is but reasonable to suppose they would seek out for, and employ, men of the highest integrity
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and greatest ability to conduct their Government, upon whom the people, and especially their representatives, would always keep a watchful and a jealous eye, as being Ministers *appointed by the King*: there is, therefore, every security that human wisdom can suggest, and our excellent Constitution has provided, to warrant our hopes of a wise, upright, and benevolent Administration upon such a plan. Let us now, on the other hand, examine the securities the demagogue of an House of Commons offers for the superior excellence of his Administration; and, as I mean no reflections on any Minister, I shall confine myself in this discussion to mere abstract reasoning, without any application to facts. We will, then, suppose the Minister to have attained his situation through the following of a majority in the House of Commons. His first object will of course be, to secure its attachment and to augment its number. He must therefore bestow all the offices of Govern-

ment among them, not according to their fitness for the offices, but their utility to himself.

If the nation be engaged in a war when the demagogue seizes upon the Administration, to avoid the difficulty of raising fresh supplies, he will make peace upon any terms, however disgraceful or disadvantageous, as he knows *his* majority will approve them, because of the security that peace will give them in the enjoyment of their places, and the good things to be had upon the winding up of a war. But the King, feeling that reputation is power, and that a jealousy of honour is the best protection from insult; and considering that a mean submission to an ignominious peace is an invitation to a renewal of hostilities, would cheerfully submit to the present inconvenience, and, by a vigorous exertion of the remaining resources, vindicate his own honour, and compel

compel the enemy to an equitable accommodation.

Should the demagogue assume his power at the close of a war, and find the public credit funk, its finances embarrassed by the load of an immense unfunded debt; instead of making an advantageous composition with the spoilers of the public, he would find it *his* interest to take measures for raising the price of their securities; and, to gratify the monied men, and attach them to his party, he would suffer a large portion of the unprovided-for debt to remain unfunded, to give them the advantage of dealing in it, and to save himself the odium of providing funds for its liquidation; at the same time holding out to his competitors a prospect of great embarrassment upon getting into his place, and so rendering it difficult for the King to remove him. The King, on the contrary, consulting the future safety and advantage of his people, would lose no
time

time in liquidating and disposing of the unfunded debt, so as to be in a situation to procure, at all times, an immediate supply, by the issue of Exchequer Bills, should any hostile appearances in other states make a sudden preparation for defence necessary; that being the surest means of preventing an attack, and preserving peace.

It being the true interest of the Hereditary Monarch, that the House of Commons should always be composed of men of the largest landed property, and of the most ancient families, or of such as were connected with them, whose influence with the people, arising from their confidence in them, would induce a quiet submission to the acts of the Legislature, and a ready acquiescence under the taxes it imposed, and thereby give stability and respect to the Government, there would be no danger of a wise Prince using his influence to the prejudice of such candidates.

But

But as it would be the interest of such a Minister as I have been describing to court popularity, and strengthen himself against the King, he would take away the inducement such great men might have to bring their relations into Parliament; by abolishing many of the respectable places and offices held by commissions from his Majesty, and procuring the appointment, by Act of Parliament, of Commissioners of his own nomination, to discharge their functions; such Commissioners not to be removable by the King; and still farther to weaken the Crown and to strengthen himself, it would be his interest to obtain acts incapacitating others of the King's officers from sitting in the House of Commons; while many who held lucrative offices by his own or his confederates' appointment, and were therefore dependent upon him and not upon the King, continued to retain their seats. The natural consequences of such measures I have already shewn in a former
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publication*, to be as injurious to the public liberty as their immediate effects would be prejudicial to the Crown; and I will now add, that should the House of Commons ever lose the confidence of the people, (which God forbid,) an enterprising Prince might not find it difficult to induce them to make a like sacrifice to that which the people of Denmark made to their King; and indeed, under such circumstances, it would appear to be the wisest course the people could take, to invest the King and the House of Lords with the sole legislative authority.

It would be the interest of such a Minister as I have been describing, to reduce the public charge for the *present*, by throwing every possible burthen upon posterity, and at the same time to anticipate their means of defraying it; to use up the naval and ordnance stores

* Extra Official Papers, Vol. I. p. 8, 9,

without

without going to the expence of providing others ; and to dispose of the forest lands and growing timber, to procure money without additional taxes : but it would be the interest of the Crown to meet every difficulty in front, and to combat it as it arose ; to provide abundant supplies of every necessary store in time of peace, and to secure a certain succession of timber in all future ages, by preserving and planting the forest lands.

I will not farther multiply instances of the difference of interests between the King and such a Minister, lest I should become too particular ; but those I have given will, I trust, be abundantly sufficient to justify the distinction I have made between them ; and to prove that the interests of the Minister are confined to his own continuance in office, which will prompt him to make the best advantage of his own time ; while the King must look forward to posterity,

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and take future consequences into his estimate of present advantage; and that therefore it is the truest patriotism to endeavour to restore the natural influence of the Crown, and to repress that of such a Minister.

I mean not by any thing I have said to serve or injure any party, but as their views may have a tendency to promote or obstruct the public prosperity and happiness, which I consider as inseparably connected with the preservation of the Constitution, and the maintenance of a due balance among all its parts. I have no attachment to Opposition, nor do I bear any enmity to Mr. Pitt; on the contrary, although I cannot approve intirely of his management of the finances, yet his undertakings discover such a spirit of command as enforces obedience, and insures success in war, that I am free to declare my firm belief, that if he had been in his present situation in the year 1776, I should have now been
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in possession of my American estate and offices : and the manly firmness with which he took up and supported the King's government, at a time when the majority of the House of Commons were in declared opposition, deserves the thanks of every friend of the monarchy ; and I should hope to see him a principal Servant of the Crown in the broad-bottomed administration I have been supposing.

The enslavement of our Kings to the demagogues of the House of Commons is not however to be wholly imputed to the increase of the national debt ; there were other circumstances which rendered the subjection of the two first Kings of the House of Brunswick unavoidable, and which were the occasion of establishing that novelty in the Constitution, a prime or sole Minister. I will briefly mention them.

The first George ascended the throne a stranger to the people, their language

and constitution, with a divided nation, and a Pretender to the Crown. It was therefore his wisest course to put himself and his Government into the hands of that party which was attached to him; and whose interest and safety were connected with his support. His son, though some time in England as Prince of Wales, had not sufficient acquaintance with the Constitution to undertake the direction of the Government; and as the nation was still divided, and he had also a Pretender to his Crown, he did not venture to enlarge the bottom of his Administration beyond the party which supported his title; and so entirely did both confide in their Ministers, and submit themselves to their guidance, that neither ever presided in the Cabinet Council, nor is there a single public measure of their reigns which can with any propriety be termed *their own*; and the historians of that period, instead of calling it the reigns of George the First, and of George the Second, ought to denominate it the reigns of

of Lord Townshend, the Walpoles*, the Pelhams, and Lord Chatham.

His

* Sir Robert Walpole, who was First Commissioner of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer for 22 years, and under two reigns, was neither *implacable* nor *vindictive*, even to the friends of the Pretender, much less to his own opponents; but, though a very vigilant Minister, was what is called a *sweet-blooded man*, for at the same time he took care the Jacobites should do no mischief, he did them no harm; a strong instance of which was given me by my worthy friend the late Doctor Campbell, who, though a man of excellent understanding, as his works abundantly testify, was a believer in the divine hereditary right of Kings, and consequently attached from principle to the House of Stuart.

It happened that a messenger who was employed by the Jacobites in England, to carry on their correspondence with the Pretender, had prevailed upon the Doctor to write a letter to the Pretender's Secretary; and as the messenger was in Sir Robert's pay, he carried that letter with the rest to Sir Robert, who sent for the Doctor the following morning (as he often did at other times, having frequently employed his pen in writing in defence of his Administration), on pretence of talking to him about something he was to write. He took him to a window which looked into the street, and while they were standing there together, Sir Robert had contrived that the messenger should

His present Majesty came to the Crown with every possible advantage ; born and bred a Briton, a most dutiful subject to his grandfather, the best son to his mother, and the most virtuous Prince ; uncontaminated with any vice, and uninfected by any dissipated associates of his convivial hours. All parties were eager to express their zeal for his service, and affection to

should pass by, and looking up, moved his hat to them ; upon which Sir Robert asked the Doctor if he knew that man, and who he was. The Doctor in some alarm, immediately answered that he was very well acquainted with him ; and that he could assure him he was a very worthy honest man. He may be so, said Sir Robert, but he is certainly a very careless one, for he gave me a letter yesterday, which I believe was not intended to come into my hands, and I think its direction is your hand-writing ; and pulling out the Doctor's letter, he gave it to him back unopened. The Doctor fell upon his knees, and vowed, that as he had given him his life, it should be devoted to his service, and he never ceased to be his fervent advocate throughout the remainder of his life. And Sir Robert was so well convinced of his sincerity, that he would have given him a valuable office ; but the Doctor would not sacrifice his principles to his interest, and declined the offer, and continued a non-juror as long as the old Pretender lived.

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his person ; and the only obstacle which presented itself to his taking his station where the constitution places him, at the head of his Administration, and forming it out of the virtuous and able men of all connexions, was his finding a Minister already in possession of the supreme direction, who had acquired great popularity by his splendid talents, and the brilliant successes of the war he conducted. The language of his Court, however, gave the friends of monarchy to hope that his Majesty would come forward to his people upon the return of peace ; and the Earl of Bute, who was known to possess his private confidence, was free in his declarations, that his Majesty had no intention of governing by a Party, but would found his Administration upon the broad affections of his united People. The promotion to the Peerage, and the appointment to offices of some of the Tory families, gave credit to these declarations ; and happy would it have been for the nation and his Majesty if they had been still adhered to. But the

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Earl of Bute having broke with the Duke of Newcastle, and connected himself with Mr. Fox, the connexions of the late Ministers were entirely dismissed, and the Whigs conceived themselves to be so generally proscribed, that their attachment to the House of Brunfwick could not restrain them from venting complaints against their Sovereign, and forming a determined opposition to the new Administration. The fact of a total departure from the conciliating plan which had been professed being so evident, they made it the ground upon which credit was gained among the people for a variety of charges, highly injurious to his Majesty, and destructive of his popularity. And as several of these charges still retain some influence over the public opinion, and may upon some future occasion be again revived and propagated, I shall distinctly state and examine the foundations of the most important of them. And although I am aware that in doing this I shall expose myself to the enmity of many powerful individuals, and excite the
ill-

ill-will of all parties, without recommending myself, by my candour, to any ; and what I esteem of infinitely greater importance, I fear I shall run some hazard of giving offence where it has been the object of my life to seek for approbation ; I will, notwithstanding, venture upon the arduous undertaking ; because I conceive that in so doing, I am discharging my duty : and that to withhold from my fellow-subjects that knowledge of the truth which it has been my fortune to obtain, upon points of such infinite importance to their happiness as the real character of their Sovereign, and his conduct towards the several Administrations he has employed, would be a crime against my King, my country, and my God. Impelled, then, by these sentiments, I shall proceed, regardless of consequences to myself.

The King's early predilection for the Earl of Bute, and his affection for the Princess Dowager, though made matter of charge, I shall not attempt to disprove :

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but that Mr. Pitt's resignation in 1761 was effected by secret influence, or the intrigues of Carleton House, I absolutely deny. The point upon which he and Lord Temple differed with the rest of the Cabinet Ministers, it is well known, was his proposition of sending a squadron to intercept the Spanish register ships expected in Europe, before Spain had committed any act of hostility against us.—Mr. Pitt had, however, received *private* information of the Family Compact being actually signed; but he concealed that information from the King himself, and from all the other members of the Cabinet, except Lord Temple; and although it was the knowledge alone of that fact which could have justified the measure, yet the refusal of their concurrence who were unacquainted with it, was the cause assigned for his resignation.

That the dismissal of the Administration in 1765 was the consequence of the Princess Dowager's resentment of the
treatment

treatment she had received in the Regency business, is another falsehood, which I have the most unquestionable authority for asserting; and I will give the history of the transaction in Mr. Grenville's own words, as he related it to me, upon my telling him of what was commonly reported respecting it. "Can you," says that great Minister, "think me such a
 " fool as to have endeavoured to make a
 " difference in the Royal Family? If I
 " had been base and idiot enough to attempt it, I know the King's natural
 " affections are so strong, that I could
 " not have succeeded; and depend upon it, whoever is weak and wicked
 " enough to attempt it, will pull down
 " ruin upon himself. No, my friend,
 " it was my interest, as well as my
 " duty, to make the King happy in his
 " family, and beloved and respected by
 " his people; and my conduct in that
 " very business, which they say was
 " the cause of my dismissal, was so
 " well

“ well approved by the King and the
 “ Princess Dowager, that I received
 “ both their thanks for it. The Re-
 “ gency Bill was, indeed, framed by
 “ the Duke of Cumberland and Mr.
 “ Fox, during the King’s illness, when
 “ I went very seldom to him. His Ma-
 “ jesty gave the bill to Lord Halifax to
 “ present to the House of Lords, as a
 “ measure of his own. The bill em-
 “ powered the King to appoint any of
 “ the Royal Family Regent, which gave
 “ occasion to the Duke of Richmond to
 “ move to ask the opinion of the
 “ Judges, whether the Princess Dow-
 “ ager was of the Royal Family. To
 “ avoid so disagreeable a discussion, Lord
 “ Bute came up to Lord Halifax in the
 “ House, and told him to put an end
 “ to it, by excluding the Princess
 “ Dowager, who, they all knew, the
 “ King did not intend to appoint Regent,
 “ and who, he could take upon him to
 “ say, had no desire to be included in
 “ the bill. In consequence of Lord
 “ Hali-

“ Halifax’s report of this to the King,
 “ His Majesty sent a message by him to
 “ the Lords, limiting himself in the
 “ appointment of the Regent to the de-
 “ scendants of George the Second; and
 “ with this expedient the Princess Dow-
 “ ager was well pleased, until some of
 “ her ladies observed to her, that the
 “ Princess Amelia, whom she hated (and
 “ there was no love lost between them)
 “ was capable of being Regent, though
 “ she was not: that roused the female
 “ spirit, and the Princess immediately
 “ went to the King, and complained of
 “ the indignity put upon her: but His
 “ Majesty would not give way to her
 “ request of recalling his message; and
 “ when he told me, the next day, of
 “ the Princess’s uneasiness, he added,
 “ that he could not alter what he had
 “ done. I, however, saw he was
 “ much affected; and, to relieve his
 “ concern, proposed to have the Prin-
 “ cess’s name inserted in the bill, in
 “ the

“ the House of Commons, upon the mo-
 “ tion of some of her own servants ;
 “ which gave His Majesty much satis-
 “ faction ; and accordingly I desired Mr.
 “ Morton, her Attorney General, and
 “ Mr. Martin, her Secretary, to make and
 “ second the motion ; and, to guard
 “ against any possible mistake or misre-
 “ presentation, I writ down the speech I
 “ intended to make upon the occasion ;
 “ the only speech I ever did write, and
 “ shewed it to the King before I went to
 “ to the House. Depend upon it,” said
 Mr. Grenville, “ there is no part of the
 “ King’s character so much mistaken by
 “ the Public, as his being under the in-
 “ fluence of the Princess Dowager ; for,
 “ although he has for her all the affec-
 “ tion a son ought to have for a mother,
 “ she has often been obliged to apply to
 “ me for the smallest favour to any of
 “ her own people ; always telling me,
 “ that when she asked the King for any
 “ thing, his constant answer was, Madam,
 “ I ne-

“ I never talk about business but to my
 “ Ministers ; you must speak to them.
 “ No,” added he, “ my removal did not
 “ come from that quarter, I assure you.”

As I never pressed him to tell me more than his own inclination led him to say to me, I only observed, that the opinion I had told him was entertained by the Public, derived much credit from the backwardness Lord's Bute's friends had shewn in his support ; and that Mr. Charles Townshend had once expressed to me his wonder that he allowed them to hold so many good places, and give him so little assistance ; for were I first Commissioner of the Treasury, said he, I should have a finger for each of them, and whenever I held up any one's finger, he should be instantly upon his legs, or I would turn him out next day. Mr. Grenville said they were not backward lately ; but as they doubted, when he first came into the Treasury, of his being able to stand, they kept aloof, lest they should

should be considered of his party, and
 turned out with him; and finding that to
 be the case, he had determined to shew
 them he could do without them; and,
 by great diligence and attention, with
 little other assistance than that of his two
 Secretaries, Mr. Jenkinson and Mr.
 Whateley, he had brought things into
 such order, as to obtain the confidence of
 the House of Commons; and then those
 gentlemen became ready enough to shew
 their connection with him. But he con-
 tinued in his own system, and seldom
 called upon them, otherwise than for their
 vote: “ though,” he added, “ it would
 “ have been better if I had desired more
 “ of their assistance, and taken less upon
 “ myself, as I might not then have been
 “ liable to the imputation of setting up
 “ for myself, and of joining with the
 “ Duke of Bedford in a design of *giving*
 “ *the King the law*, which His Majesty
 “ told me was the reason of his turning
 “ us all out. And, to say the truth,”
continued

continued that most candid and honourable statesman, “ some part of the Administration had given His Majesty sufficient cause to suspect they entertained such a design ; though I was not among them.”

Lord Bute had placed Lord Shelburne at the head of the Board of Trade ; but he was to have neither the power nor patronage Lord Halifax had possessed, and he continued there after Lord Bute’s resignation. His Lordship was, however, indefatigable in his attempts to recover somewhat of that his predecessors had possessed ; and, through Lord Egremont’s indisposition to cavil, had succeeded in several points. But when Lord Sandwich came into the Southern Department, he would suffer no encroachment upon either his power or patronage ; and Lord Shelburne resisting the giving back what he had obtained, his removal was the consequence : but as his Lordship had professed an attachment to Lord Bute, his

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removal was interpreted a hostility against Carleton House. And it is probable the Duke of Bedford had in view the suppression of those who called themselves the King's friends, as well as the gratification of Lord Sandwich ; for the patronage of Scotland, which was then possessed by Mr. Stuart M'Kenzie, as Keeper of the Privy Seal, was claimed as appertaining to the Secretary of the Southern Department. The contest for it soon became violent, and the Duke of Bedford threw his whole weight into Lord Sandwich's scale, and all his friends entirely seceded from Court. The King desired Mr. Grenville to ask them what they wanted, and to bring him their demands. They stated the following : That the Scotch Privy Seal should be taken from Mr. M'Kenzie—that the Duke of Northumberland, whose son had married Lord Bute's daughter, should be removed from the Lieutenancy of Ireland, and one of their friends appointed in his room—and that the King would give his entire confidence to his Cabinet Ministers.

nisters. The King made no difficulty to accede to the second and third, as he said the Duke of Northumberland had already desired to resign the Lieutenancy of Ireland: but he desired Mr. Grenville to acquaint them, that when he had given the privy seal to Mr. M'Kenzie, who had quitted an office for life to accept it, he had promised that he should hold it during his own or the King's life, and therefore he could not, without a breach of his promise, take it from him; but he would assure them, upon his honour, that he should have no power with it, if that would satisfy them. They were not, however, satisfied with these concessions; and Mr. M'Kenzie having requested the King to permit him to resign, His Majesty acquiesced in the whole of their demand, and they returned to Court.

Such an outrage, however, upon the feelings of a gentleman, could not fail to excite resentment in the breast of a King: and when his Majesty acquainted

the Duke of Cumberland with the treatment he had met with, his Royal Highness took fire at the indignity ; and, considering it as an indubitable proof of a settled plan to enthrall the King, and reduce him to the same state of subjection as Sir Robert Walpole and the Pelhams had held his grandfather in, advised him to make an effort to procure his independence, and undertook to form a new Administration for him. The Duke first applied to Mr. Pitt, who refused to engage ; but he was more successful with the Newcastle party, and the Bedford Administration was dismissed. Mr. Grenville, however, said, he had reason to think that the King wished to have retained him in the new arrangement ; but the Duke of Cumberland found it impracticable to make an Administration without an entire change, and therefore he went with the rest.

Lord Rockingham's Administration received an early shock by the resignation of the Duke of Grafton, which testified
Mr.

Mr. Pitt's indisposition towards them ; upon whose support they affected to rely, and obtained credit with the public for it. But the appointment of the Duke of Richmond in the Duke of Grafton's room soon decided their fate ; for, at a cabinet meeting, Lord Northington and the Duke quarrelled so violently, that the Chancellor went immediately to the King, and told his Majesty, with his usual oath, that he must either get rid of those boys, or dismiss him, for he would never meet them again. The King accordingly authorised him to treat with Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Grafton, who took upon them the Administration. As the Duke of Grafton's retreat is well known to have been the effect of his own timidity, it is not necessary for me to go into the history of it ; and my situation in the following Administration, which is called Lord North's, will not allow me to be particular respecting either its continuance or conclusion. I will, however, venture two general assertions, and challenge any man to disprove

prove either, viz. That during the last twelve years of that Administration, the King, in no one instance, contravened the advice of his Cabinet ; and that had Lord North thought fit to have held his office, the King would have supported him in it, notwithstanding the defection of so many of his friends *.

The prosecution of Wilkes, and the King's refusal to give an answer to the American petition brought over by Mr. Penn, have been often urged as proofs of an arbitrary disposition in the King. But in respect to the first, I can testify that I have heard it said by Mr. Grenville, that the only thing His Majesty required of his Ministers, was *the same protection of the laws, as every one of his subjects had*

* Lord North is, I believe, the only First Commissioner of the Treasury that ever held that office reluctantly, or quitted it with his own good will, whatever others may have pretended. His Lordship told me, before the session of 1782 commenced, that he had promised the King to continue only that session, and would continue no longer.

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a right to. And whoever reads the 45th Number of the North Briton, with the feelings of a gentleman, and will suppose the charge of uttering a fallacy from the throne imputed to himself, will not think a demand of justice, by legal proceeding, the indication of an arbitrary disposition; and the harshness of the mode of prosecution adopted by the King's servants, is not to be charged upon His Majesty.

I have, in my second volume of Extra Official State Papers, pointed out the original, as well as the immediate, causes of the revolt of the Thirteen American Provinces; and I have submitted my reasons for asserting, that either their continuance with us for half a century longer upon the same footing as they had been, or their emancipation without a war, would have been attended with consequences much more injurious to this country than the enormous expences of the war have produced; and if those reasons be allowed sufficient to prove the truth of that assertion, they

they will serve, *à fortiori*, to prove that the granting the Colonies exemption from the jurisdiction of Parliament, and allowing them to retain all the privileges and advantages of British subjects, would have been still more destructive to Great Britain. This, I have the best authority for saying, was his Majesty's opinion from the beginning of the contest ; and he very early declared it to be his determination rather to cast off the revolted Colonies entirely, than consent to give up the authority of the supreme Legislature over them, or allow them to possess superior advantages to those enjoyed by his European subjects. In this opinion, and in this resolution, my noble friend Lord Sackville most heartily concurred ; and his Lordship's declaration in the House of Commons, which has been so much misrepresented, will be found to convey no other ideas, when fairly examined. For what other meaning can be given to the words *unconditional submission*, when applied to the return of revolted subjects to

to their allegiance, than their being received upon the same footing with their brethren? What Englishman pretends to claim any conditions from the Government he lives under, but those which the constitution and laws entitle him to in common with his fellow-subjects? And is not his submission to their authority implicit and universal?

The petition brought over by Mr. Penn was delivered to Lord Dartmouth, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, by that gentleman and Dr. Franklin, at a time when Parliament was not sitting. His Lordship presented it to the King, and His Majesty referred it to the consideration of his Cabinet Ministers. It was found to contain a demand of the repeal of several acts of Parliament; and a denial, in effect, of its legislative jurisdiction over the Colonies. Had His Majesty and his confidential servants been disposed to comply with these demands, they had not

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the power to do it without the concurrence of the two Houses of Parliament, and it would have been presumptuous, in the highest degree, to have undertaken to procure that concurrence. The only answer, therefore, that could be given with propriety, was, that as the petition contained matters in which the authority and jurisdiction of Parliament were deeply concerned, it would be laid before them as soon as they met for their consideration; and therefore, that His Majesty, for the present, must decline giving any answer to it from himself. This is precisely what was done; and Lord Dartmouth, in a confidential private conversation with Mr. Penn and Dr. Franklin, acquainted them with the result. Those gentlemen did not, however, think fit to relate the whole of what Lord Dartmouth had told them to the Congress; or if they did, the Congress chose to suppress it; for all that was published of it in America, and returned here, was, that the King *would give no answer.*

answer. The public will judge how far that was from the *whole truth*; and whether any evidence of an arbitrary disposition in His Majesty can be deduced from this plain narrative of the proceeding.

The many changes of Administration, and the variety of Ministers of opposite tempers, connections, and principles, that have been successively employed in this reign, and the favour they all appeared to be held in, has been urged by the retainers of all parties as a reason for their making strict terms for themselves, and not trusting to any appearances of confidence. But in which of the charges I have reviewed has there appeared any want of sincerity in His Majesty towards his Ministers? and that civility of behaviour, which he has shewn to them all, was fairly and conscientiously accounted for by what he told his whole Cabinet, on the 21st of June, 1779, viz. “ That he considered himself
 “ as invested with a trust by the Almighty,
 H 2 “ which

“ which it was his duty to discharge, to
 “ the best of his ability, for the advan-
 “ tage of all his subjects ; and that there-
 “ fore he never should allow himself to
 “ entertain prejudices against any man,
 “ or set of men, but to employ whoever
 “ appeared to possess the public confi-
 “ dence, if their principles were good,
 “ and they held no doctrines prejudicial
 “ to the constitution.”

I have intermixed no comments of my
 own with the relations I have given ; but
 I submit the plain facts I have stated to
 the candid consideration of the Public ;
 and there are living witnesses to vouch for
 their truth, or to contradict them, if
 falsely stated ; and it surely must fill every
 good subject with astonishment, to find
 that charges so atrociously false and ca-
 lumnious as those I have examined, should
 ever have been propagated ; or that if any
 were wicked enough to propagate them,
 that they should ever find credit with a
 loyal and sensible people. But that they
 were

were propagated, and that they did find credit, are facts too notorious to be denied; and, as I before observed, it may happen, that the same malevolence which first forged them, may again revive them, in the hope of abating that flame of affection which now burns in every breast, I have judged it no improper time to expose and confute them; for, in case His Majesty should be prevailed upon to gratify the general wish of his people, and come forth to them as their Sovereign, at the head of an Administration, composed of the ablest and honestest men in his dominions, and deliver the Monarchy from the trammels of faction, and the dictatorship of democratic demagogues, no shadow of doubt ought to be suffered to exist in the minds of the people, which might lessen their confidence, or withhold their full support upon such an occasion.

I need not go about to prove that this country can now produce as able and as honest

honest Statesmen as were to be found in it at any period since the existence of the Monarchy ; but it is, notwithstanding, a melancholy truth, that the King and the nation have never been able to avail themselves of the assistance of more than a part of them at any one time. The well-meant endeavours of the country gentlemen, who met at the St. Alban's Tavern, in 1784, failed, as we all know, through the refusal of the leaders of either party to act under the other. But His Majesty has it in his power to obviate that objection to a broad-bottomed Administration, by declaring his intention of having *no Chief Minister*, but taking upon himself the exercise of the function the constitution has given him, and presiding in his own Cabinet Council.

The great Elizabeth, and even the weak Anne, *sat* with their Ministers in Council, and the latter often heard the debates in the House of Lords ; and the practice of
receiving

receiving the opinions of all through the channel of one, was unknown in this country before the reign of George the First, who introduced it, because of his own want of the English language, and that few of his Ministers could speak any other. It is, however, a practice which, I will venture to say, it would be more for the honour as well as happiness of the King, and benefit of the kingdom, to break than observe. Should it be asked, Would Ministers submit to the King's interference? I answer, that it is a principle founded in the very nature of all Governments, that the supreme executive Power has a right to call for the assistance of all and every of the subjects, in carrying on the administration of the public affairs, in the manner prescribed by the constitution; and it is a breach of duty in any individual to refuse to serve the State, in a station consistent with his dignity, and not beyond his ability to execute, when called upon by his Sovereign.

reign. The right, therefore, of the King of Great Britain to the service of any of his subjects being indisputable, it rests with His Majesty to require it, in a constitutional manner, of such as he thinks the most fit and capable; and to apportion among them such parts of the executive authority as he thinks fit to entrust to their management, in the manner he judges most advantageous for the public; and it would be highly blameable in any one to demand a greater share of authority to himself, much more to insist upon a power of controlling others, as the condition of his giving his assistance to the State; and such presumption ought to meet with the public censure, inasmuch as the Public must suffer by it. And were the great leaders of parties assured that such would be the consequence, none would dare to propose conditions, much less to dictate terms, to their Sovereign: but the proudest connections knowing they should lose their influence with the

Public,

Public, by such arrogance to their King, would be content to become his *servants*, and the *servants* of the nation, instead of assuming to command both. And, if that were the case, what a glorious Administration might we not expect to see selected by His Majesty out of his two Houses of Parliament, centering in it all the wisdom of both ! Such an Administration would meet the difficulties and embarrassments of the national affairs with a steady countenance ; they would enter fully and deeply into the consideration of the circumstances of the State, investigate the sources of its maladies, and apply *effectual* remedies ; and avail themselves of that *precious opportunity* which the embarrassments of other nations affords of retrieving our circumstances, recovering what has been maimed or decayed of the political body, improving what has not attained to full perfection, and invigorating and refreshing the whole.

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His Majesty standing forth to his people as the chief and head of his Ministry, and presiding in the Cabinet, there could be no room for that bane of public councils, *jealousy*, to enter into it, or possess any of the members ; for his Majesty would, of course, confine every Minister to the business of his own department ; and when any matters occurred, of such importance as his Majesty thought fit to take the opinion of his other servants upon, he would be pleased to call them together in his own presence for the purpose. Nor would a struggle for patronage occasion any discontent, as his Majesty would probably judge it proper to take the creation of Peers, the appointment to Bishopricks, and to all offices compatible with a seat in the House of Commons, into his own hands ; strictly prohibiting any of his servants from proposing any person to him for those dignities or offices, unless they received his special permission to do so ; and acquainting them all, that whenever he accepted
any

any of their recommendations, the person appointed should know, and acknowledge, that he received the favour from his Majesty's grace, and hold himself obliged to him for it*. This would put an effectual stop to that most unconstitutional and undutiful practice of Ministers availing themselves of the power and favours of the Crown to form parties for themselves, to follow them into opposition, whenever the King thinks fit to remove

* There cannot be a greater or more fatal solecism in politics, than the suffering a temporary Minister to attach to himself *hereditary* seats, or even seats *for life*, in either House of Parliament; and yet such has been the *complaisance* of his present Majesty to his Ministers in that particular, that were he to remove Mr. Pitt, and a coalition to take place between him and Mr. Fox, (and as unlikely things have happened) the King would run a hazard of seeing a majority in the House of Peers against his measures, composed of Lords and Bishops of his own creation; for if any of them were asked who made them a Peer or a Bishop, the answer would not be, (except from a very few) *his Majesty's goodness*; but the *favour* of the Earl of Bute, Lord Chatham, Lord Rockingham, Lord North, the Duke of Portland, or Mr. Pitt.

them ; and we should hear no more those reproaches of ingratitude to their patrons which are now always cast upon such as refuse to join them in opposing the King's measures. These are the only means of destroying faction, and of inducing all parties to unite in promoting the public happiness and prosperity ; for none could hope, by opposing what was right and proper, to force themselves into office. And the greatest orator, who would refuse to serve upon the footing I have been supposing his Majesty to form his Administration upon, would find his declamation then to make as little impression upon the good sense and public spirit of the people, as the *retailers of verbage* from under the gallery are now able to make upon the House of Commons. That excellent understanding which the Prince of Wales is allowed by all to possess, would shew his Royal Highness, that it was as much his interest, as it would be his duty, to give his full support to such measures. For what must have been his own situation,

ation, if that calamity, which we all so much deprecated, and which we are so thankful to the Almighty for averting, had happened? And what is it likely to be, if the independency of the monarchy be not restored, when in the course of nature it comes to his turn to mount the throne, but the option of submitting to be *led* by one demagogue of the House of Commons, to avoid being *drove* by another*? Should, however, all the great orators refuse to

* It must give pleasure to every man who looks forward beyond his own time, to see the *eldest* sons of many of our nobility holding efficient offices, and surrounding the Minister on the Treasury Bench; for early habits of business are the surest guards against dissipation, and those *evil communications* which *corrupt* the best natural dispositions; and they also tend to render a necessary attention to their own affairs, as well as to those of the public, not only not irksome, but agreeable. What pity is it, then, that the *eldest son* of the *greatest man* in the nation, whose future situation is so much more important, should be debarred the like advantage of acquiring early habits of attention to the affairs of the people he is destined one day (though God grant it may be a distant one) to govern!

serve

serve upon the footing I have supposed his Majesty to require their services, a King of Great Britain, who, like our present virtuous and gracious Sovereign, makes the laws the rule of his government, can never be distressed for able and upright Ministers, who has such noblemen attached to his person and constitutional authority as Lord Thurlow, the Marquises of Stafford and Bath, Lords Hawkesbury and Dover; and, I trust I may add, Lords Stormont, North, and Sandwich; and while there exists such a respectable body of independent Members of Parliament as are associated with the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Rawdon, for the support of the Monarchy, and the preservation of the constitution.

For what, indeed, have honest and sensible men to apprehend, that should deter them from undertaking the management of public affairs, though they are not great orators? Sir Robert Walpole

pole was no very brilliant declaimer; Mr. Pelham still less so; and my revered friend Mr. Grenville never uttered a trope in his life; and his youngest son, who is the fittest man in the nation for the office of *Chancellor* and *Under Treasurer* of the Exchequer, is more attended to for the good sense of what he says, than for the polish of the language in which it is clothed*. The truth is, that neither the Members within doors, nor the people without, are so ignorant as to be led,

* I remember a strong instance of the superiority which plain good sense acquired over the most brilliant declamation, some years ago in the House of Commons, when I was attending in the gallery. The late Mr. Charles Townshend, being offended with the Duke of Newcastle, thought fit to shew his ill humour, by making an attack upon Alderman Baker's contract; and he played off all the lightning of his eloquence upon the occasion. The Alderman, who was no orator, but possessed as sound a judgment as any man of the age, got up as soon as Mr. Townshend had finished his Philippic, and told the House he had but two words to say, by way of answer, to all the Gentleman's fine speech against him—*prove it*; and sat down, under a roar of applause from all parts of the House.

like

like a flock of sheep, by the bleating of a bell-wether. They like, indeed, to hear a fine speech made, or a fine sermon well preached; and crowd to the church, the Parliament-house, or Westminster-hall, for the sake of the *entertainment*; and are loud in their commendation of the talents of the speaker who gratifies them; but they carry home with them as little regard for his person, and are as little influenced in their future conduct by what they heard in the one place as the other: as the late general dislike, which was expressed at the intended promotion, and supposed influence, of the two most admired orators of the age, abundantly testifies.

The present is, therefore, on every account, the most proper season for entering upon this truly patriotic and constitutional work, of depressing the influence of the democratic dictator, and restoring to the Crown the splendor and dignity
it

it has been despoiled of. I trust, therefore, that some Members of that respectable Society to which I address this paper, will take an early opportunity, in the next session, to bring the state of the King's government under the consideration of Parliament—That they will move to rescind that atrocious calumny upon his Royal Person and Ministry, contained in Mr. Dunning's Resolution—That they will move for leave to bring in a Bill to amend Mr. Crew's Act, by restoring the Freeholders to their *indefeasible rights*—And that they will propose a resolution to the effect of declaring, That no person, who holds an office of profit under the Crown, otherwise than by a charter-right, or by appointment of his Majesty, ought to be capable of sitting in the House of Commons ; and, in order to give dignity to their proceedings, and complete official information to the House, to declare by a farther resolution, that it would be proper to supply the places of such de-

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pendents upon the Minister as would be so excluded, by rendering one of the Commissioners of the Boards of Customs, Excise, and Stamp Duties in England and Scotland, and one of the Commissioners for auditing the Public Accounts, capable of sitting in that House. If these propositions are concurred in by the present Parliament, the next will be a truly constitutional assembly. The great subjects I have proposed to consider, would undoubtedly engage their most serious attention ; and as I should contradict my own principles if I did not offer the best assistance I am capable of affording them, I shall take care to be prepared upon each, when the happy time arrives.

F I N I S.

Knox, William

Considerations on the present State of the Nation

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